

What is Claimed is:

1. A method for managing data communication on a network coupled to first nodes and second nodes comprising:

controlling a first time period for one or more first data transmissions on the network wherein the first nodes are permitted to transmit data during the first time periods and the second nodes are not permitted to transmit data during the first time period by causing the second nodes to treat the first time period as a single transmission period.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the single transmission period appears to the second nodes as a transmission of a single packet of data.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein the single transmission period appears to the second nodes as a single collision resolve process.

4. The method of claim 1, further comprising controlling an inter-frame gap between the first data transmissions by the first nodes during the first time period such that the second nodes treat the first time period as a single transmission period.

5. The method of claim 1 further comprising controlling the first data transmissions during the first time periods by the first nodes such that the first data transmissions overlap.

6. The method of claim 5 further comprising sending non-informative data in the first data transmissions during the overlap.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein each of the first data transmissions have a beginning, an end and a transmitted power level, said method further comprising: controlling the transmitted power level at the end of each of the first data transmissions so that the variation between the transmitted power level at the end of each of the first data transmissions and the beginning of each of the next of the first

data transmissions is such that the second nodes do not sense an energy drop between the first data transmissions.

8. The method of claim 1 further comprising controlling a second time period for one or more consecutive second data transmissions on the network wherein the first nodes and the second nodes are permitted to transmit data during the second time period.

9. The method of claim 8 further comprising supporting contention based operation during the second time period.

10. A network manager for managing data communications on a network comprising:
a controller for controlling a first time period for one or more first data transmissions on the network wherein the first nodes are permitted to transmit data during the first time periods and the second nodes are not permitted to transmit data during the first time period by causing the second nodes to treat the first time period as a single transmission period